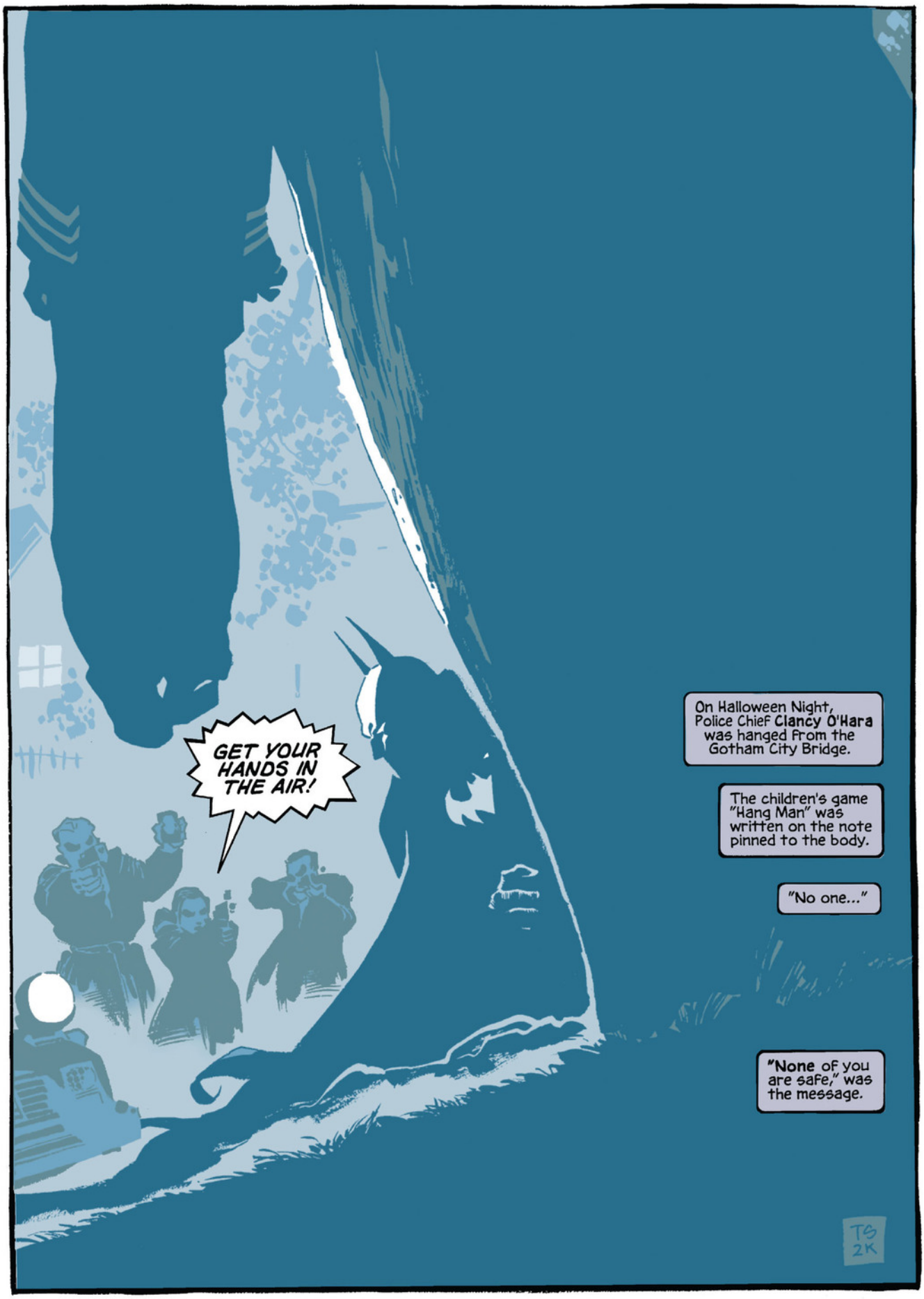
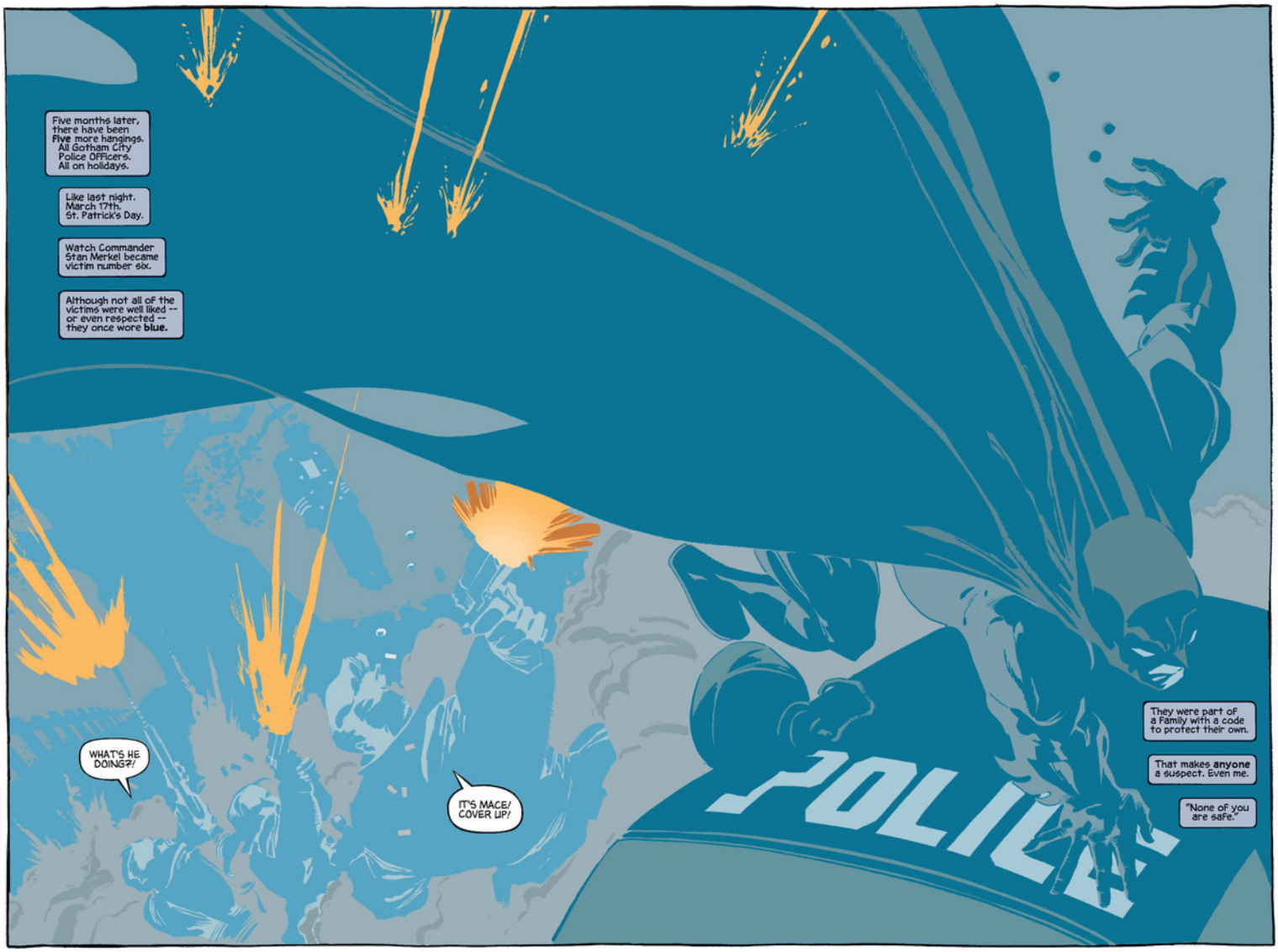
CHAPTER SEVEN FOOLS


GET YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR!
On Halloween Night, Police Chief **Clancy O'Hara** was hanged from the Gotham City Bridge.
The children's game "Hang Man" was written on the note pinned to the body.
"No one..."
"**None** of you are safe," was the message.
TS 2K


Five months later, there have been **five** more hangings. All Gotham City Police Officers. All on holidays.
Like last night. March 17th. St. Patrick's Day.
Watch Commander Stan Merkel became victim number six.
Although not all of the victims were well liked -- or even respected -- they once wore **blue.**
They were part of a family with a code to protect their own.
That makes **anyone** a suspect. Even me.
"None of you are safe."
WHAT'S HE DOING?!
IT'S MACE! COVER UP!
POLICE

KAFF KAFF KAFF
I didn't have sufficient time to examine Merkel's body before the police arrived.
KAFF KAFF KAFF
But I suspect that Merkel was killed elsewhere and then **hung** up **here...**
...Once the home of **Harvey** and **Gilda Dent.**
The Hang Man killer or **killers** have gone to great lengths to point the investigation toward the Former District Attorney.
The question is... why?
HOLD YOUR FIRE! FOR GOD'S SAKE, HOLD YOUR FIRE!

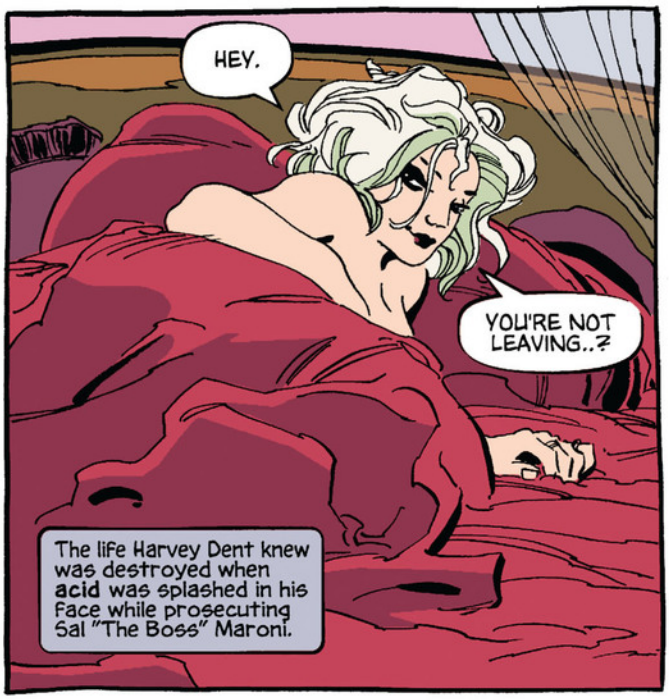
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

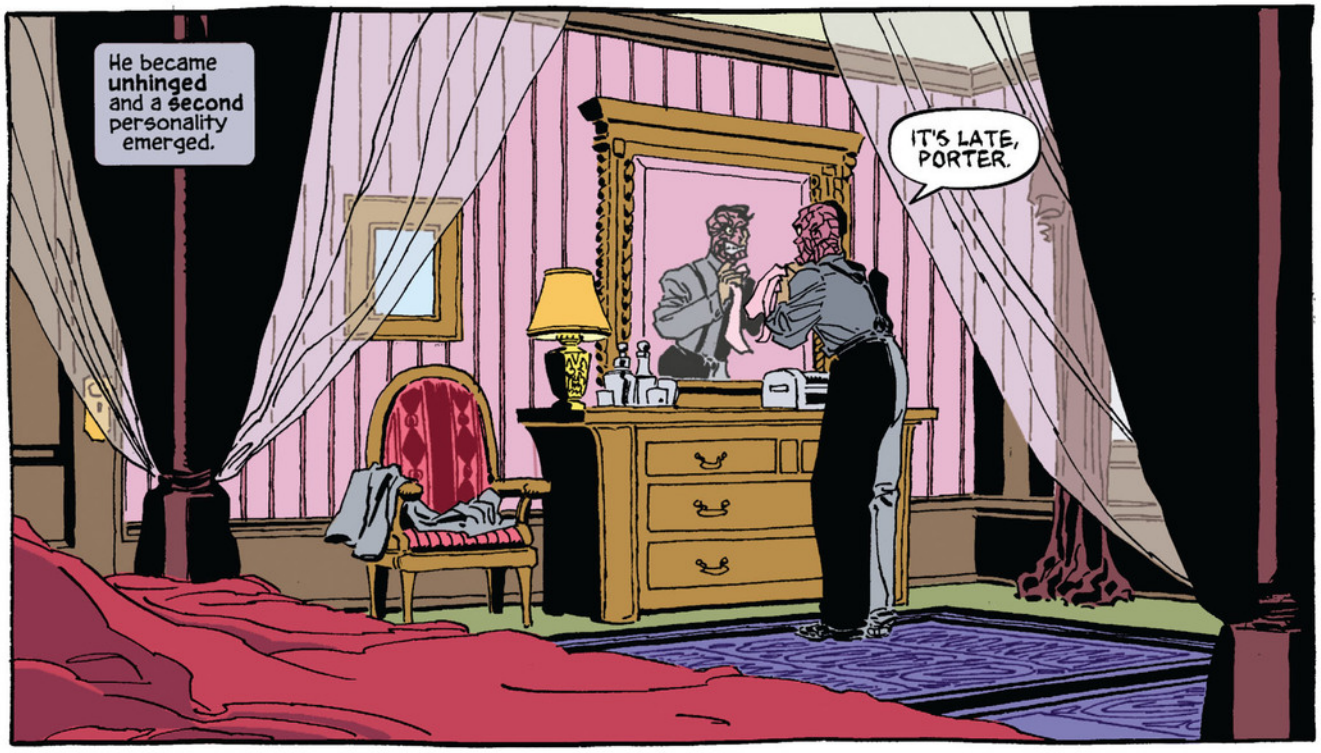
YOU TOLD US, SIR, THAT IF BATMAN INTERFERED IN OUR INVESTIGATION --
-- WE WERE TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.
KAFF KAFF KAFF

DOES SHOOTING UP A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD SOUND LIKE "APPROPRIATE ACTION" TO YOU, LOPEZ?
BATMAN IS NOT THE ENEMY, DESPITE WHAT ANY OF YOU MIGHT BELIEVE.
IF YOU HAD THE SLIGHTEST GRASP OF THE GOOD HE'S DONE FOR GOTHAM CITY --
-- FOR ALL OF US WHO WEAR A BADGE!

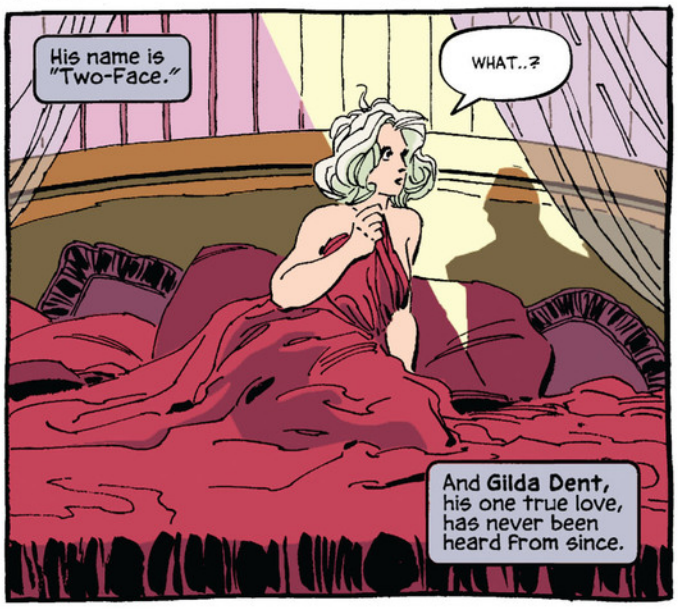
AND BESIDES, HE'S PROBABLY A MILE AWAY FROM HERE BY NOW.
NOW, SECURE THE AREA AND SEE IF YOU CAN CALM DOWN SOME OF THESE NEIGHBORS UNTIL THE M.E. ARRIVES.
I... I'VE GOT TO CALL MERKEL'S WIFE...

Two weeks later.
TEL ESSEX


HEY.
YOU'RE NOT LEAVING..?
The life Harvey Dent knew was destroyed when **acid** was splashed in his face while prosecuting Sal "The Boss" Maroni.


He became **unhinged** and a **second** personality emerged.
IT'S LATE, PORTER.

I'M DUE IN COURT.


His name is "Two-Face."
WHAT..?
And **Gilda Dent,** his one true love, has never been heard from since.

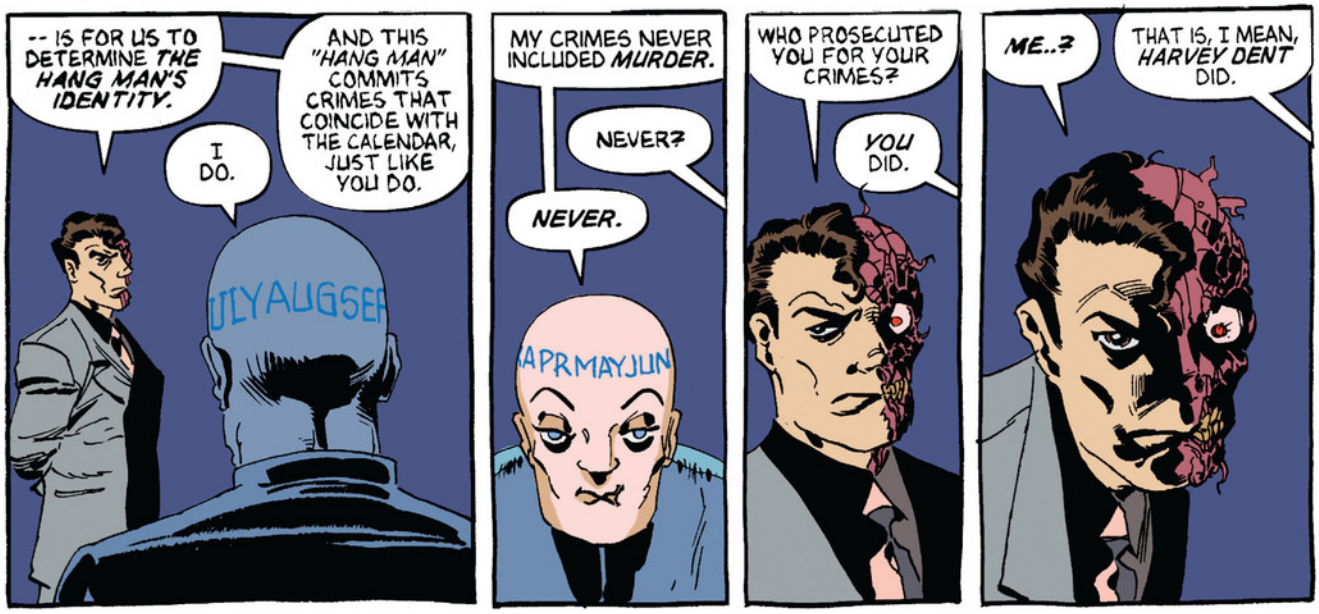
STATE YOUR NAME FOR THE RECORD.

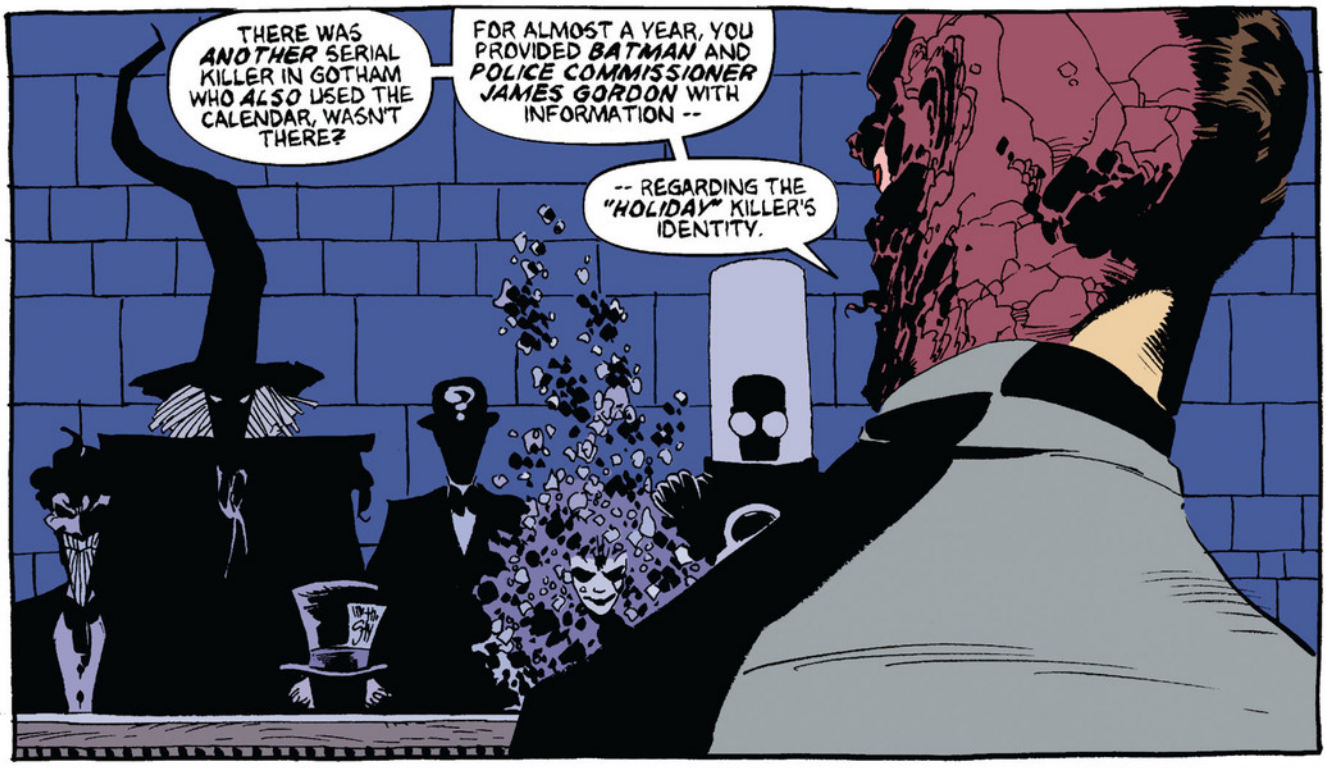
JULIAN DAY. THE CALENDAR MAN.

AND YOU ARE CALLED *"THE CALENDAR MAN"* BECAUSE YOU COMMITTED CRIMES THAT COINCIDED WITH THE CALENDAR, CORRECT?

YES.

YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THIS ENTIRE PROCEEDING -- THIS GRAND JURY INQUIRY --




THERE WAS ANOTHER SERIAL KILLER IN GOTHAM WHO ALSO USED THE CALENDAR, WASN'T THERE?
FOR ALMOST A YEAR, YOU PROVIDED BATMAN AND POLICE COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON WITH INFORMATION --
-- REGARDING THE "HOLIDAY" KILLER'S IDENTITY.

THE CALENDAR MAN WAS BEING FORGOTTEN.
THAT WAS UNACCEPTABLE.
JANFEBMAR

DID YOU KNOW WHO THE "HOLIDAY" KILLER WAS ALL ALONG?
...

DID YOU?
YES. I DID.
DID YOU TELL THEM?
NO.
I WANT YOU TO TELL ME --
HOLIDAY WAS ACTUALLY --
APRMAYJUN

-- NO.
I WANT YOU TO TELL ME --
-- WHO IS THE HANG MAN?

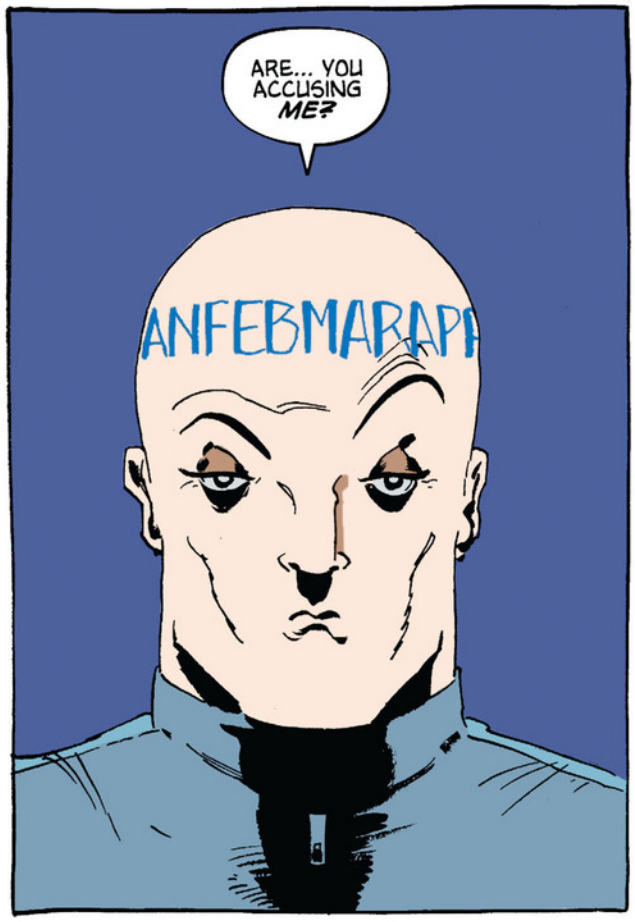
Ha.

GIVEN THE FACTS WE HAVE --
-- THE NOTES LEFT AT THE SCENE ALL APPARENTLY COMING FROM HIS FILES --
-- COUPLED WITH HIS KNOWING EACH OF THE VICTIMS --
EBMARAPRMAY
-- THE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS HARVEY DENT.

Hmm...
A LITTLE TOO OBVIOUS, DON'T YOU THINK?

THOSE TATTOOS ON YOUR HEAD. HAVE YOU ALWAYS HAD THEM?
WHAT? NO. THEY'RE NEW.
YOU NEVER HAD THEM BEFORE?
I JUST SAID THAT.

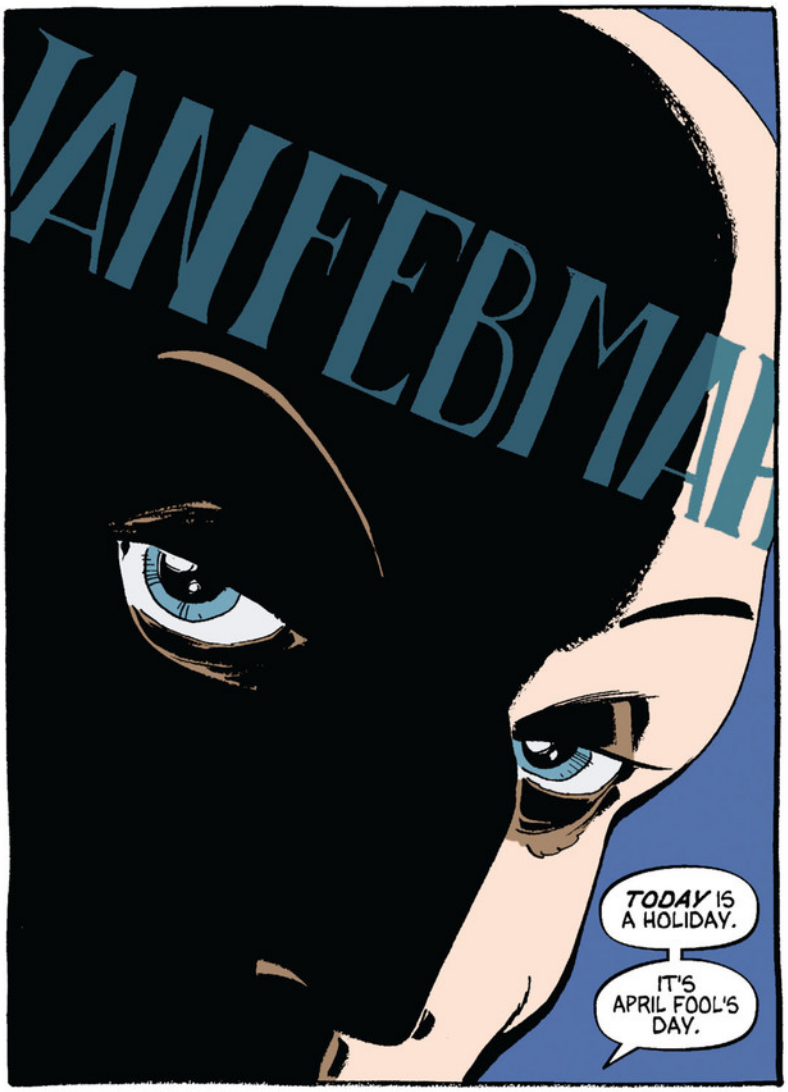
BUT... WE CAN AGREE, CAN'T WE -- THAT JUST AS A MAN CAN CHANGE HIS FACE --
-- HE CAN CHANGE HIS CRIMES AS WELL?
TO ALSO INCLUDE MURDER?


ARE... YOU ACCUSING ME?
ANFEBMARAPR

THE LONGER THEY SUSPECT HARVEY DENT IS THE HANG MAN, THE MORE... COMPLICATED THINGS BECOME FOR US.
IT HAS TO STOP.
NOW...
...WHO IS THE HANG MAN'S NEXT VICTIM?

ANSWER THE QUESTION, CALENDAR MAN.
IF HARVEY DENT'S FILES ARE BEING USED BY THE HANG MAN --
-- AND DENT KNOWS WHO IS IN THOSE FILES --
-- MAYBE YOU SHOULD ASK HIM.

BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO ACT QUICKLY.
WHY IS THAT?

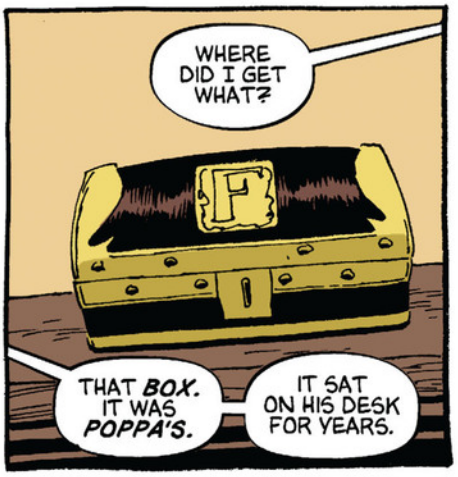

TODAY IS A HOLIDAY.
IT'S APRIL FOOL'S DAY.

The Falcone Estate near Wayne Manor.
Alberto Falcone is under house arrest, supposedly unable to leave the grounds.
I GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.
YOU DID, DID YOU?
ON THE COFFEE TABLE.
OPEN IT.
.22 CALIBER WITH THE SERIAL NUMBER FILED OFF.
BABY BOTTLE NIPPLE.
THE HANDLE *TAPED* LIKE YOU LIKE.
PICK IT UP.
IT'S JUST WHAT YOU'VE WANTED.
IT'S WHAT YOU *THINK* I'VE WANTED --
-- GIVEN WHO *YOU* ARE.

TALKING TO YOURSELF AGAIN...
...ALBERTO...?

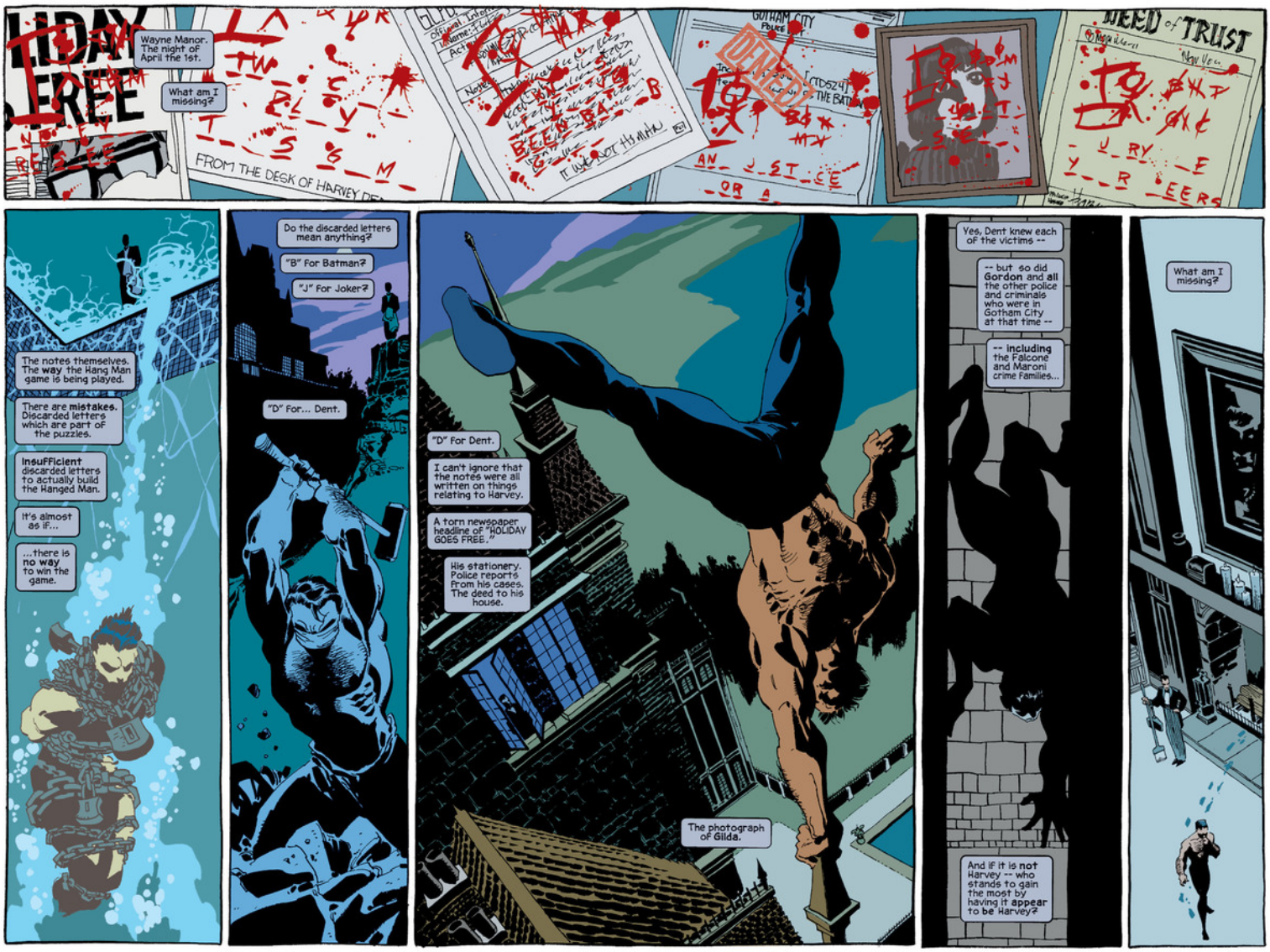
WAS I TALKING TO SOMEONE, SOFIA?

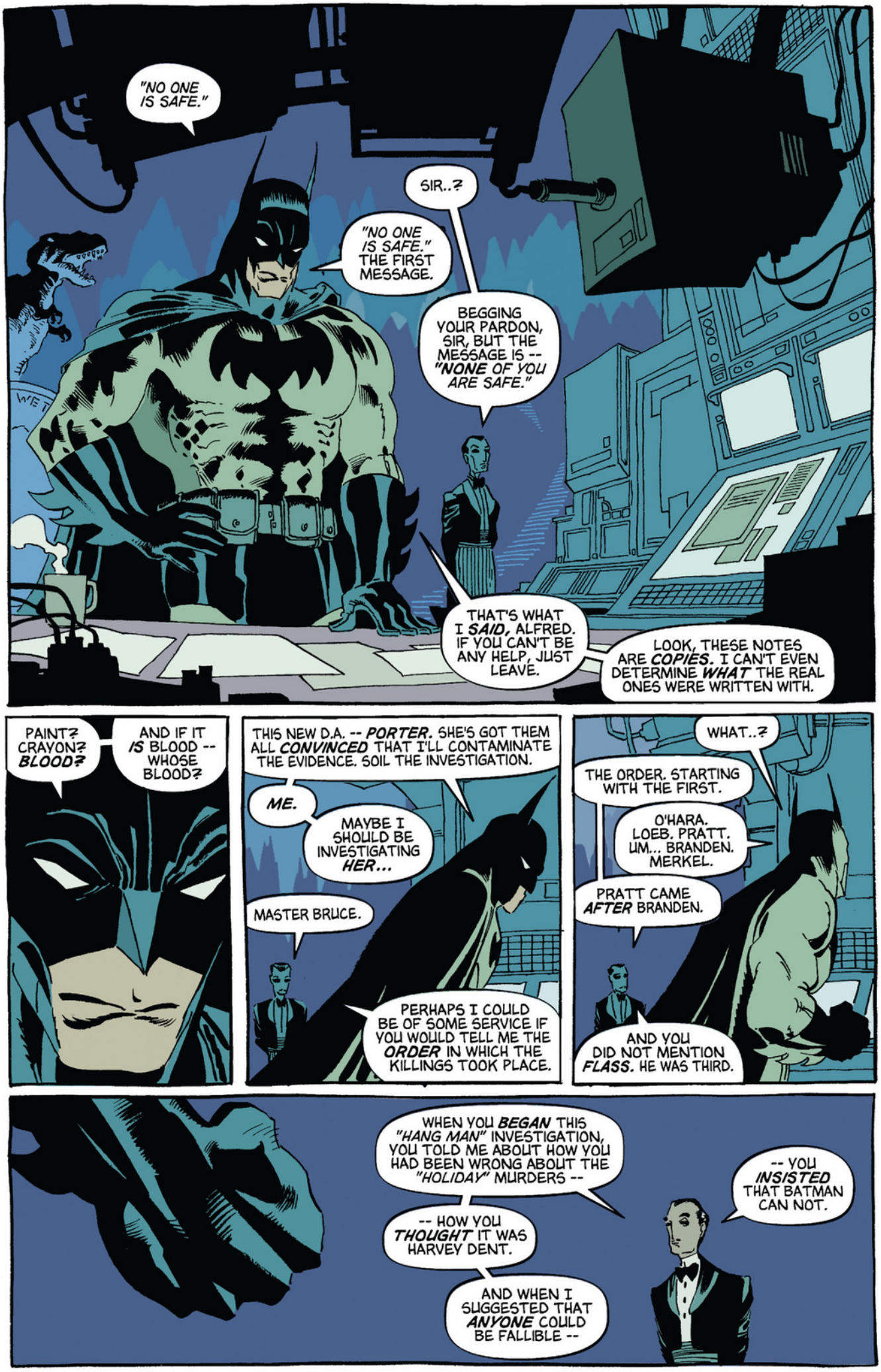
NEVER MIND. MR. MIRTI AND I WENT TO SEE BOBBY GAZZO IN METROPOLIS.
MY GODFATHER IS GOING TO HAVE WORDS WITH OUR BROTHER.
MARIO FALCONE MADE A VERY BIG MISTAKE BY TAKING SIDES AGAINST THE FAM--
-- WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?!


WHERE DID I GET WHAT?
THAT BOX. IT WAS POPPA'S.
IT SAT ON HIS DESK FOR YEARS.

THEN, IT SAT ON MY DESK, IN MY PENTHOUSE --
-- UNTIL YOUR BROTHER LOCKED ME OUT.
I'M ONLY GOING TO ASK YOU ONCE, ALBERTO.
ARE YOU IN WITH MARIO AND AGAINST ME?

YOU AND MARIO DO WHAT YOU WANT.
I HAVE MY OWN PLANS.


Wayne Manor. The night of April the 1st.
What am I missing?
FROM THE DESK OF HARVEY DE
GOTHAM CITY POLICE
DENIED
DEED of TRUST
The notes themselves. The way the Hang Man game is being played.
There are mistakes. Discarded letters which are part of the puzzles.
Insufficient discarded letters to actually build the Hanged Man.
It's almost as if...
...there is no way to win the game.
Do the discarded letters mean anything?
"B" For Batman?
"J" For Joker?
"D" For... Dent.
"D" For Dent.
I can't ignore that the notes were all written on things relating to Harvey.
A torn newspaper headline of "HOLIDAY GOES FREE."
His stationery. Police reports from his cases. The deed to his house.
The photograph of Gilda.
Yes, Dent knew each of the victims --
-- but so did Gordon and all the other police and criminals who were in Gotham City at that time --
-- including the Falcone and Maroni crime Families...
And if it is not Harvey -- who stands to gain the most by having it appear to be Harvey?
What am I missing?


"NO ONE IS SAFE."
SIR..?
"NO ONE IS SAFE." THE FIRST MESSAGE.
BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR, BUT THE MESSAGE IS -- "NONE OF YOU ARE SAFE."
THAT'S WHAT I SAID, ALFRED. IF YOU CAN'T BE ANY HELP, JUST LEAVE.
LOOK, THESE NOTES ARE COPIES. I CAN'T EVEN DETERMINE WHAT THE REAL ONES WERE WRITTEN WITH.
PAINT? CRAYON? BLOOD?
AND IF IT IS BLOOD -- WHOSE BLOOD?
THIS NEW D.A. -- PORTER. SHE'S GOT THEM ALL CONVINCED THAT I'LL CONTAMINATE THE EVIDENCE. SOIL THE INVESTIGATION.
ME.
MAYBE I SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING HER...
MASTER BRUCE.
PERHAPS I COULD BE OF SOME SERVICE IF YOU WOULD TELL ME THE ORDER IN WHICH THE KILLINGS TOOK PLACE.
WHAT..?
THE ORDER. STARTING WITH THE FIRST.
O'HARA. LOEB. PRATT. UM... BRANDEN. MERKEL.
PRATT CAME AFTER BRANDEN.
AND YOU DID NOT MENTION FLASS. HE WAS THIRD.
WHEN YOU BEGAN THIS "HANG MAN" INVESTIGATION, YOU TOLD ME ABOUT HOW YOU HAD BEEN WRONG ABOUT THE "HOLIDAY" MURDERS --
-- HOW YOU THOUGHT IT WAS HARVEY DENT.
AND WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT ANYONE COULD BE FALLIBLE --
-- YOU INSISTED THAT BATMAN CAN NOT.

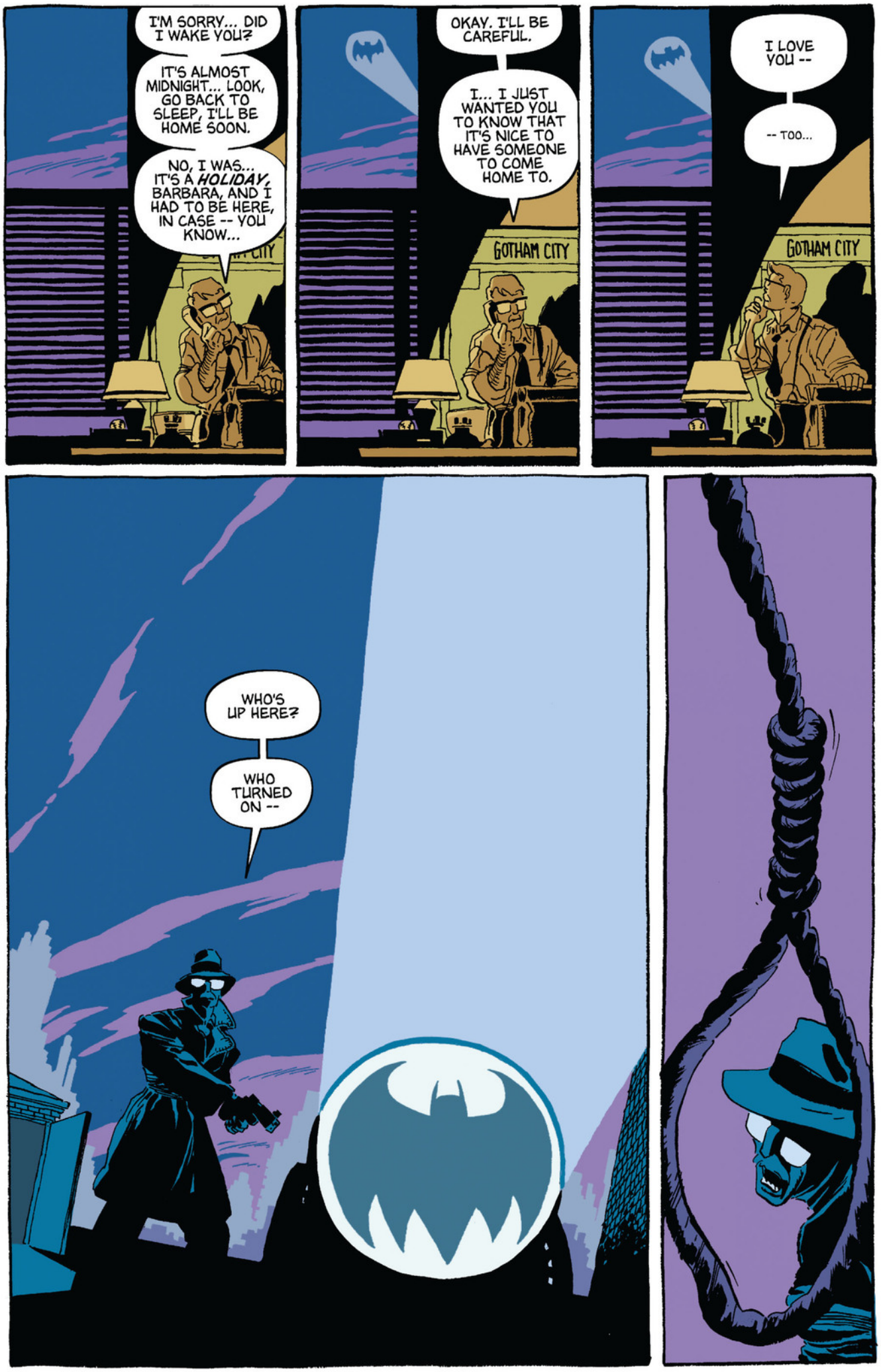
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT ME TO SAY, ALFRED?!

IT'S... NOT WHAT YOU COULD SAY, SIR.
IT'S YOUR DECISION ON HANDLING THIS ALONE. WITHOUT EVEN ANOTHER PAIR OF EYES TO HELP.
WITHOUT JIM GORDON.
WITHOUT CATWOMAN.
EVEN... WITHOUT ME.
I... I CAN'T BE WRONG.

YES. THE SUM OF YOUR WORST FEARS.
MADE ONLY WORSE... IN MY OPINION... SINCE CHRISTMAS EVE.
WHEN YOU BEGAN AVOIDING MISS KYLE'S... COMPANY.
SELINA..?
BUT, ON CHRISTMAS EVE, I WAS TRYING TO CAPTURE...

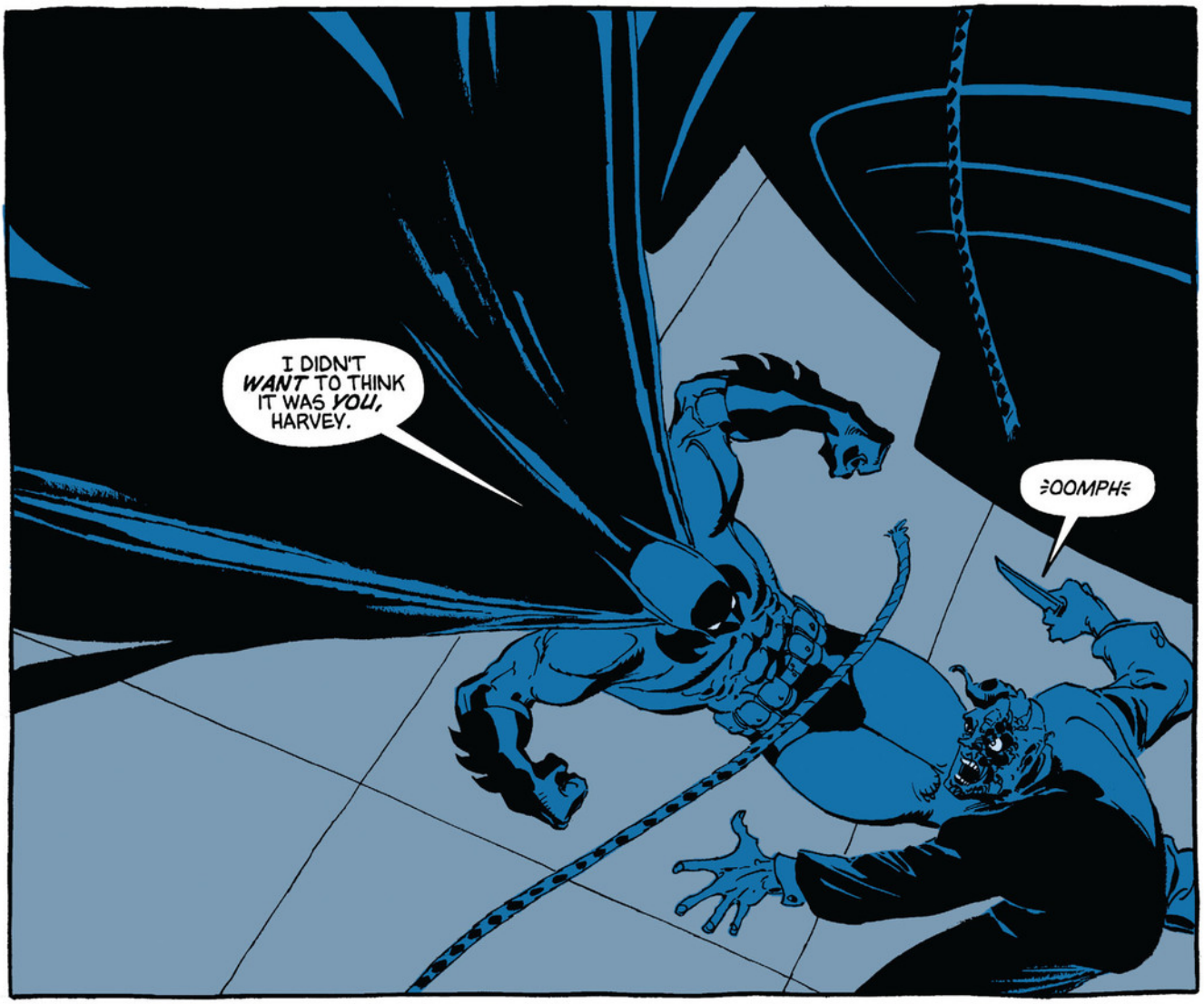
THE SCARECROW.
I REMEMBER NOW. I WAS EXPOSED TO HIS FEAR GAS... FROM THAT DOLL...
...
YES, SIR.
I'LL... FETCH MY MEDICAL BAG.

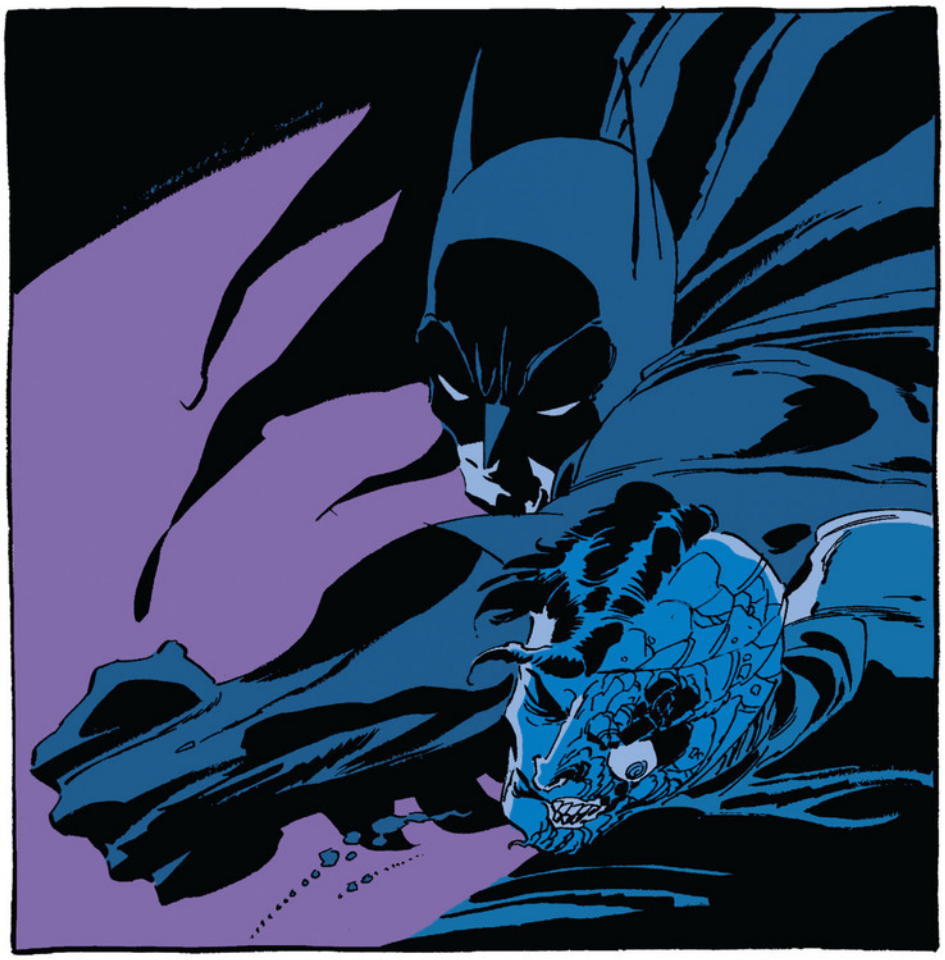
ALFRED...
...THANK YOU.
THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH BEING ALONE, MASTER BRUCE --
-- IS BEING ALONE.


I'M SORRY... DID I WAKE YOU?
IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT... LOOK, GO BACK TO SLEEP, I'LL BE HOME SOON.
NO, I WAS... IT'S A *HOLIDAY*, BARBARA, AND I HAD TO BE HERE, IN CASE -- YOU KNOW...
OKAY. I'LL BE CAREFUL.
I... I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE TO COME HOME TO.
GOTHAM CITY
I LOVE YOU --
-- TOO...
GOTHAM CITY
WHO'S UP HERE?
WHO TURNED ON --

ACK

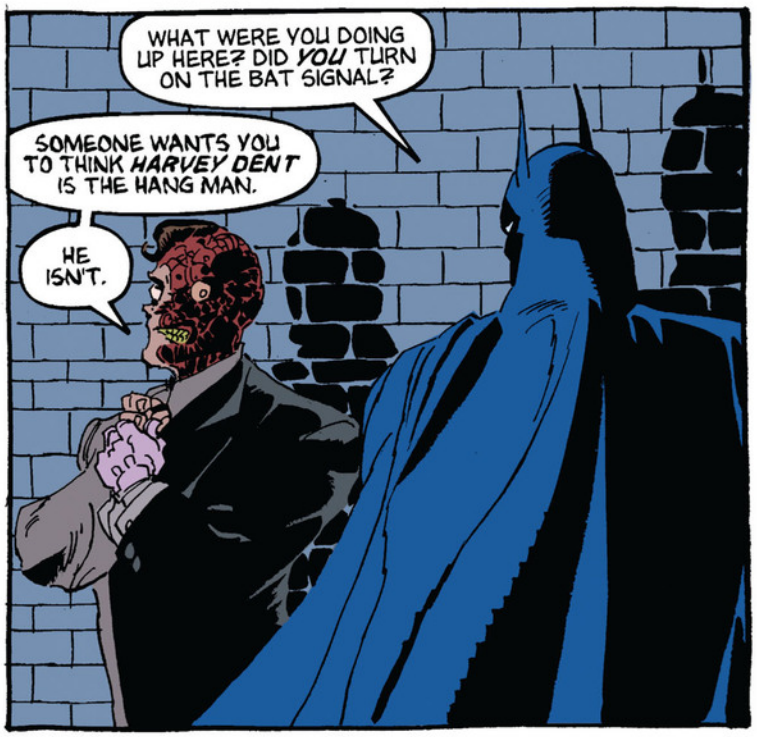
ACK


I DIDN'T *WANT* TO THINK IT WAS *YOU,* HARVEY.
=OOMPH=



SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, BATS, BUT --
STOP!

HE -- =KAFF= HE CUT ME DOWN, BATMAN.


WHAT WERE YOU DOING UP HERE? DID *YOU* TURN ON THE BAT SIGNAL?
SOMEONE WANTS YOU TO THINK *HARVEY DENT* IS THE HANG MAN.
HE ISN'T.

DID YOU SEE WHO IT WAS, HARVEY?
HARVEY IS *NEVER* COMING BACK, JIMBO. GET USED TO IT.
PARTICULARLY TO HELP A *PAIR* OF OLD FOOLS.

DON'T TRY TO FOLLOW ME.
I'VE GOT *TWO* MARKSMEN ON *TWO* DIFFERENT ROOFS. YOU *TOUCH* ME, BATS --
-- THEY KILL *GORDON*.
"DOUBLE JEOPARDY," SO TO SPEAK.

TWO-FACE!
DID *YOU* SEE WHO ELSE WAS UP HERE?
GO TO HELL.

YOU ALL RIGHT?
MY NECK IS GOING TO BE SORE --
-- BUT BARBARA CAN WORK MIRACLES WITH HER HANDS.
BARBARA..?
MRS. GORDON HAS RETURNED?
SHE HAS. MY SON, TOO.
BATMAN. DID YOU BELIEVE HIM?
DOES TWO-FACE TELL THE TRUTH? ISN'T THAT WHAT HE IS -- "TWO-FACED"?
HE COULD'VE SET UP YOUR "HANGING" JUST TO THROW US OFF.
OR MAYBE HE WAS TELLING US THAT HARVEY WASN'T THE HANG MAN, BUT TWO-FACE IS.
BUT WHERE IS THE NOTE? THE REAL KILLER ALWAYS LEAVES THE HANG MAN GAME.
DIDN'T HAVE TIME -- OR -- WAIT, WHAT IS THAT?
DID YOU DROP THAT --?
NO. HARVEY MUST'VE.
OR THE KILLER..?
IT'S A POLICE REPORT. IT GOES BACK A FEW YEARS -- BEFORE OUR TIME.
THE ARRESTING OFFICERS WERE SERGEANT CLANCY O'HARA AND PATROLMAN STAN MERKEL.
THE PROSECUTOR WAS... ASSISTANT D.A. HARVEY DENT.
JIM, THIS WAS ONE OF HARVEY'S FIRST CASES.
THEY HAD ARRESTED MARIO FALCONE.
PROSECUTION

The Ace Trucking Company is controlled by the Maroni Family and run by Anthony "Fats" Zucco.
ACE
YOU'RE HEALIN' UP REAL GOOD, EDDIE.
NOT MANY OF US LEFT CAN TAKE A BULLET LIKE YOU DID.
WE GOT MUCH BIGGER PROBLEMS, ZUCCO.
WITH THOSE FREAKS RIPPING US OFF RIGHT AND LEFT, IT'S CUTTING INTO OUR TAKE.
EXACTLY WHY YOU AND ME GOTTA GET MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS.
REMEMBER HOW I TOLD YA I BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT MOVING MERCHANDISE IN A WHOLE NEW WAY?
A WAY NOBODY'S EVER DONE BEFORE?
SURE, ZUCCO. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE MARONIS AND THE FALCONES?
SCREW 'EM.
THIS IS SOMETHIN' FOR US. FOR OUR FAMILIES.
AND IF IT WORKS, WE COULD BE BIGGER THAN BOTH OF THEM.
RETURNED
SHOW ON
OST BEST
HALY CIRCUS
COMING SOON!
SO, ALL I GOTTA KNOW, EDDIE, IS --
-- YOU IN OR OUT?
The FLYING GRAYSONS!
LOEB SALE ZK

DET. J. FLASS
DENT, G.
MERKEL, S.
Masked Vigilante eludes police
HOLIDAY KILLER STALKS GOTHAM
D.A. Dent Maimed
POLICE
GOTHAM CITY
Gillian B. Loeb
Daddy by James